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WelcomeBC

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2008AG0031-000998
June 25, 2008

Ministry of Attorney General
and Minister responsible for Multiculturalism

FUNDING SUPPORTS ANTI-RACISM AND MULTICULTURALISM

VANCOUVER – More than $475,000 in WelcomeBC funding is going to 20 projects across the province that promote multiculturalism and prevent racism, Attorney General and Minister responsible for Multiculturalism Wally Oppal announced today.

"Involving young people and the public in creating communities that are respectful and inclusive helps them to be more aware of the substantial benefits cultural diversity brings to British Columbia," Oppal said. "We want to put a stop to attitudes that contribute to racism, and make our communities safe for everyone."

BC Anti-Racism and Multiculturalism Program (BCAMP) funding helps to prevent and eliminate racism by enhancing community understanding of multiculturalism and cultural diversity. The new projects are located in northern and Interior communities from Terrace to Kelowna, and throughout the Lower Mainland, as well as Duncan, Campbell River and Victoria.

Proposed youth projects, totalling over $270,000, include a theatre project for secondary schools, peer mentoring and workshops to promote understanding of cultural diversity. Community engagement proposals will help create welcoming and inclusive communities through approaches like community dialogues, diversity training and teaching resources.

"This funding will empower communities and our youth to create awareness about racism and promote diversity in our community," said Sharon Pannu, acting executive director of the Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society of Prince George. "Young people can be particularly effective at working with their peers to develop inclusive, welcoming communities."

Groups were given the opportunity to apply for funding of up to $30,000 for projects, through a request for proposals (RFP) on the BC Bid website. Thirty-four proposals were received, with 20 meeting the RFP criteria. Contract negotiations to finalize the successful proposals are underway.

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The projects are supported under WelcomeBC, a provincial initiative announced by Premier Gordon Campbell on June 13, 2007. Funding is provided in part by the Government of Canada through the Agreement for Canada-British Columbia Co-operation on Immigration. WelcomeBC helps immigrants moving to B.C. access existing and expanded services under one umbrella, to assist them in better adapting to life in their new communities.

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1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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BACKGROUNDER

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ANTI-RACISM AND MULTICULTURALISM FUNDING AWARDS

The Province is providing more than $475,000 provincewide to 14 community organizations to support proposed activities that prevent and eliminate racism by enhancing community understanding of multiculturalism and cultural diversity. The funding is part of government's BC Anti-Racism and Multiculturalism Program (BCAMP).

Organization/Recipient	Location	Grant	Project Description
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS			
Campbell River and Area Multicultural and Immigrant Services Association	Campbell River	$20,074	A racism inventory tool will be created to assess racism issues in the Campbell River area. A theatre project is planned for local secondary schools.
Abbotsford Community Services	Abbotsford	$30,000	Workshops will help young people to understand cultural differences.
Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria	Victoria	$26,924	A series of training workshops is planned for students taking the youth ambassador curriculum. The workshops will promote diversity in schools and neighbourhoods.
Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society of Prince George	Prince George	$30,000	A peer mentorship and leadership model will be used to empower youth to create awareness and promote diversity in the community.
The Family Education and Support Centre	Maple Ridge	$29,519	A game show will educate youth about multicultural issues and anti-racism awareness. The show will lead to a youth mentorship program to encourage youth to educate their peers about multiculturalism.
Skeena Diversity Society	Terrace	$30,000	A Grade 7 forum on bullying and racism, a fine arts session and a project to enable youth to share their stories through photography will be used to develop youth leadership on diversity and inclusiveness.
Kamloops Cariboo Regional Immigrant Society	Kamloops	$30,000	A conference for youth from diverse backgrounds will be organized to promote cross-cultural understanding and racism awareness.
Cowichan Valley Intercultural and Immigrant Aid Society	Duncan	$30,000	A team of youth and adults from diverse backgrounds will develop an education toolkit to train teams to co-facilitate diversity education, promote multiculturalism and build inclusive communities.
Mission Community Services Society	Mission	$19,312	The society will develop multicultural education learning strategies targeted to youth through the use of fine art, visual art and structured experience and interaction with peers in the district of Mission.

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Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society	Victoria	$10,000	Youth Strides is a summer training project that will add a new component that engages up to 15 immigrant and refugee youth. The project involves workshop participation and leadership development in the form of presentations, theatre, music, dance forum, art and media interfacing that will explore themes of identity and personal experience. It will facilitate discussion about multiculturalism, ant-racism and cross-cultural learning experiences.
Kelowna Community Resources Society	Kelowna	$15,250	The society will develop an initiative to provide anti-racism leadership training for high school youth. Twelve high school students will be recruited to be youth ambassadors and facilitate the workshops.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS			
Campbell River and Area Multicultural and Immigrant Services Association	Campbell River	$11,740	A discrimination action committee will identify community needs, develop multiculturalism action plans and offer diversity and cultural awareness education.
Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria	Victoria	$21,534	Diversity training will be provided to organizations, including businesses and post-secondary institutions, to encourage them to build and support inclusive and welcoming workplaces.
The 411 Seniors Centre Society	Vancouver	$21,600	The project will record oral histories of elders from diverse cultures.
Collingwood Neighbourhood House Society	Vancouver	$19,900	Events and activities will be used to bring neighbours together to celebrate and share cultural experiences.
Kelowna Community Resources	Kelowna	$29,299	The organization will provide diversity education and experiential opportunities and build appreciation of cultural diversity.
Kamloops Cariboo Regional Immigrant Society	Kamloops	$30,000	A teachers' educational resource kit will help meet the unique, multicultural education needs of rural communities.
Cowichan Valley Intercultural and Immigrant Aid Society	Duncan	$28,204	Community members will be invited to share their experiences of their own cultures.
Mission Community Services Society	Mission	$22,375	A community map will highlight areas of cultural minorities and related demographics. The agency will develop an inventory of organizations that plan and co-ordinate actions that intersect with Aboriginal or immigrant communities.
Powell River Employment Program Society	Powell River	$24,000	Community dialogues will focus on diversity, while enhancing multiculturalism and anti-racism education.

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